Weavers Welfare Scheme

582. SHRI R. SAMBASIVA RAO : Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Union Government have selected 40 districts of various States throughout the country to implement welfare Schemes aimed at welfare of weavers;

(b) if so, whether the Government of Andhra Pradesh *have urged the Union Government for extension of the Scheme to East Godavari and Karimnagar Districts also;*

(c) If so, the reaction of the Union Government thereto and *the total amount provided to each district,* and

(d) the number of weavers likely to be benefited therefrom.

THE MINISTER OF TEXTILES (SHRI R.L JALAPPA): (a) The Government of India have identified 40 districts in various States/Union Territories as growth centres for their integrated development.

(b) and (c) The Government of Andhra Pradesh have urged for inclusion of East Godavari and Nalgonda Districts. These districts have been identified on selective basis considering the concentration of handlooms in the area. Government is not planning to expand the list to cover any other district of the Country.

(d) The number of weavers likely to be covered will be based on the proposals forwarded by the State Government.

Monopolies Restrictive Trade Practices

583. SHRI BHIMRAO VISHNUJI BADADE : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Director General (Investigation and Registration) of the Monopolies Restrictive Trade Practices Commission enjoys the statutory powers to initiate criminal proceedings under section 49 of the Monopolies Restrictive Trade Practices Act of 1969;

(b) if so, whether prior permission of the Monopolies Restrictive Trade Practices Commission is necessary for such prosecution;

(c) if so, under which provisions of the Acts, Rules or the Regulations; and

(d) the details of the similar provisions of the Acts, and Rules in Canada, America, UK, Australia wherein such prior permission is required or not required?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ) : (a) to (c) The issue relating to powers of Director General (Investigation and Registration) under section 49 of the MRTP Act, 1969 is under consideration before the Monopolies and Restrictive Trade Practices Commission in Prosecution No. 4/96 in RTPE No. 267/95 in the matter of Tata Engineering and Locomotive Company Limited. The matter is listed before the full Bench of the Commission for hearing on 20th January, 1998. The matter is subjudice.

(d) On the lines of Section 49 of the MRTP Act, *1969 there are provisions in the Fair Trading Act, 1973, UK and Australian Trade Practices Act, 1965–1966 which stipulate that any person who refuses or willfully neglects to furnish required information to the designated officer i.e., Director General of Fair Trading or Commissioner* shall be guilty of an offence and shall be liable to fine or imprisonment.

Most Favoured Nation Status

584. SHRI SATYAJITSINH DULIPSINH GAEKWAD : SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA :

Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Pakistan has expressed its desire to improve relations with India and the Pak Commerce Minister has stressed that free trade with India is not possible for grant of "Most Favoured Nation" status to India by Pakistan unless outstanding political issues including Kashmir are resolved;

(b) if so, whether he also turned down a proposal to set up an Indo-Pakistan Chambers of Commerce, when a delegation of Punjab, Haryana and Delhi Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PHDCCI) recently visited Pakistan;

(c) if so, the extent to which this controversial stand affected and reflected in the Secretary level talks between India and Pakistan recently; and

(d) the reaction of the Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (DR. BOLLA BULLI RAMAIAH) : (a) to (d) Government have seen media reports on the views purported to have been expressed by the Pakistan Commerce Minister that unless political issues including Kashmir issue are settled, there can neither be free trade with India nor will Pakistan agree to accord 'Most Favoured Nation' status to this country. Government have also seen media reports to the effect that the Pakistan Government is reported to have taken exception to the step taken by the Lahore Chamber of Commerce by signing a Joint Declaration with PHDCCI for setting up a Indo-Pak Joint Study Committee. However, during the